

PROCESS FOR POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF DELTA AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM BY DELTA PROTECTION COMMISSION

STATUS AS OF JANUARY 31, 2008

Consistent with the Delta Protection Act, the policies and recommendations of the land Use and Resource management Plan for the Primary zone of the Delta, and its 2006-11 Strategic Plan, the Delta Protection Commission (DPC) has initiated a process for development of a delta-wide agricultural conservation easement program.

Accomplishments to date include:

- Establishment of a team of experts consisting of representatives from DPC, Department of Conservation, Department of Food and Agriculture, American Farmland Conservancy and UC Berkeley
- DPC-facilitated discussions through formation of a Delta land trusts discussion group (Yolo, Contra Costa, Solano, Brentwood, and Central Valley)
 - Addition of a GIS specialist to DPC staff
- Completion of maps as overlays to the Primary and Secondary zones of the Delta showing: floodplain designations; elevations; habitat lands; areas of probable urbanization; agricultural land designations; crop types; lands under existing Williamson Act contracts and conservation easements
- Coordination with Delta Vision process and Delta Risk Management Strategy process

Next Steps

- Utilizing map overlays as a tool, discussions will be facilitated to establish principles for determining priority candidates for easements (following format and process similar to those shared at the 2006 Agriculture on the Urban Edge Conference in Berkeley)
- Discussion group will be incrementally expanded to include delta land use planners, county agricultural commissioners, county farm bureaus and landowners
 - Priority parameters will be identified
 - Feasible program measures will be discussed
 - Program implementation process will be developed